

## Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-14

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DRAFTED BY ARA/AND/B:DTOYRYLA  
APPROVED BY ARA/AND - MR. FULLER  
USOAS - M YOHN  
-----059694 171726Z /73  
P 171651Z JUL 78  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY LA PAZ PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PGOV, OAS, BL

SUBJECT: REPORT ON BOLIVIAN ELECTIONS BY OAS OBSERVERS

1. TEAM OF THREE OBSERVERS SENT BY OAS TO VIEW BOLIVIAN ELECTIONS SUBMITTED ITS REPORT IN FORM OF LETTER FROM LA PAZ, DATED JULY 10, TO OAS SECRETARY GENERAL. OAS HAS NO PLANS TO TAKE FORMAL COGNIZANCE OF REPORT SINCE OBSERVERS ACTED IN PRIVATE CAPACITY.

2. THE 12 PAGE REPORT PROVIDES BRIEF BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND COMMENTS ON THE PRE-ELECTORAL PERIOD. IT NOTES THAT BECAUSE PRINCIPAL OPPOSITION FIGURES WERE IN EXILE UNTIL TOTAL AMNESTY WAS DECLARED IN JANUARY, THE GOVERNMENT-BACKED POLITICAL FORCES HAD A TIME ADVANTAGE IN MOUNTING CAMPAIGN. THE REPORT MENTIONS THAT THE OBSERVERS MET WITH ELECTORAL COURT PRESIDENT AND WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF VARIOUS POLITICAL GROUPINGS ON JULY 8. OPPOSITION

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REPRESENTATIVES PROVIDED CRITIQUES OF THE PRE-ELECTION PROCESS AND ATMOSPHERE WHICH SCORED THE GOB FOR UNFAIR PRACTICES ON BEHALF OF PEREDA CAMP. OBSERVERS ENUMERATED MANY OF THE CRITICISMS BUT DID NOT HAZARD JUDGEMENTS OR COMMENTS ON THEM. CRITIQUES INCLUDED, INTER ALIA, CHANGES IN ELECTION LAW TO FAVOR OFFICIAL CANDIDATE;

FORCED RECESS OF POLITICAL PARTIES BETWEEN NOVEMBER 1974 AND NOVEMBER 1977 WHICH LIMITED OPPOSITION OPPORTUNITIES TO INFLUENCE ELECTORATE; DECLARATIONS OF SUPPORT FOR PEREDA BY MILITARY, WHICH IS PROHIBITED BY CONSTITUTION; AND VOTING URN MANIPULATION. COPIES OF WRITTEN CRITIQUES ATTACHED TO REPORT.

3. OBSERVERS DETAILED THEIR VISITS AS A GROUP TO POLLING LOCATIONS IN LA PAZ CITY/LAKE TITICACA AREA ON ELECTION DAY. THEY NOTED THAT SOME VOTING TABLES OPENED LATE AND SEVERAL WERE CLOSED EARLY BY LOCAL OFFICIALS. OBSERVERS' PRINCIPAL CRITICISM OF VOTING PROCESS WAS ABSENCE OF BALLOTS FOR "SOME" PARTIES IN A NUMBER OF POLLING PLACES. REPORT NOTED THAT, ACCORDING TO ELECTORAL LAW, IT IS RESPONSIBILITY OF ELECTORAL COURT TO DISTRIBUTE BALLOTS.

4. IN ADDITION TO CRITIQUES NOTED IN PARAGRAPH 2, OBSERVERS ATTACHED STATISTICAL STUDY PROVIDED BY MNR/PAZ ESTENSSORISTA WHICH ALLEGES TO DEMONSTRATE A COUNTRY-WIDE FRAUD FACTOR OF 20 AS A RESULT OF PHONEY REGISTRATIONS CREATED BY THE PRO-PEREDA FORCES. THE MNR CLAIMED THAT THE STUDY IS BASED UPON DOCUMENTS FROM THE ELECTORAL COURT.

5. COPY OF REPORT AND ATTACHMENTS BEING POUCHED. CHRISTOPHER

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Concepts:** REPORTS, ELECTION OBSERVATION TEAM, PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, ELECTION FRAUD  
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